

Snohomish County Noxious Weed Control Board Meeting

July 11, 2013

Conference Room 2A02, Cathcart Way Operations Center

Meeting called to order at 10:30 by Chairman John Tellesbo

There was no quorum. Dick Barr was injured in a tractor accident and couldn't attend the meeting. This is a recap of the discussion. No motions or formal business was conducted.

Board Members Present

Ed Stocker
John Tellesbo

Others Present

Mel Reitz – Operation Manager – Road Maintenance
Sonny Gohrman – Snohomish County Noxious Weed
Coordinator
Geraldine Saw – Snohomish County Lead Noxious Weed
Inspector/Technician

Approval of minutes from May meeting 2013

The approval of minutes was continued to the next meeting due to lack of a quorum.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Coordinator Report

17 tansy ragwort letters were sent. Six of these sites were new sites. We will keep up the best we can, but this problem is far larger than the existing budget. DOT District 2 has been a challenge between the Stanwood Bryant exit and King Thomsen Road. There are weeds in the cable barrier area between the Stanwood Bryant interchange and the Stillaguamish Bridge. The cable barrier area was finally sprayed on July 2nd. It took multiple emails to get the work done. It appears that a lot of Canada thistle will seed out anyway. No work done on the interchange for thistle and looks like it will all seed out. Stanwood poison hemlock was finally sprayed.

Three sites that have had long term tansy ragwort issues are possibly being controlled. In one of the sites, the bank responded and the property was sprayed. A contractor bought the property at another tansy site and is in the process of developing. There is an ongoing email conversation with the last site, but the tansy control is not great and we haven't been back recently. Janice has been working on the other weeds as time permits. BNSF has sprayed the tracks in Everett for poison hemlock and fennel. Wild Chervil is a problem in multiple sites and we have not had the time to address this properly. We don't know what will control wild chervil effectively. 3 sites were discovered this year in Monroe, Granite Falls and near Langus Park.

5 new giant hogweed sites were added this year, bringing the total sites to 59. All sites are being controlled. We have only spent \$6000 in the detention ponds and Jeff seems to be happy with what we have done. We will be adding 3 seasonals. One current seasonal and one new seasonal will be dedicated to work on the detention pond. Mel is working on providing us an additional pickup truck. There are 15 mitigation sites this year and 12 have been sprayed for the first time. A second visit will happen later in the season. 3 are not done; one needs advance notice to the property owner, another is knotweed and it is still too early to spray. The last site will be done when we are in the area doing another project. We are also going back to sites that are not listed this year as follow-up.

Sonny showed a Spartina map of where we have worked this year. 95 acres were covered in the outer areas in 4 days. 6.5 acres were covered in the inner marsh in 4 days. The difference is the density of the vegetation the crew is working in. We will be working in Spartina for another 2 weeks and then the crew time will be divided between knotweed and Spartina. The Pilchuck Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) is being formed. 43 potential members were contacted and 9 have responded. Seven attended on the first meeting and a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was put together for signature. The draft report has been done and the final version will be sent to the State. No knotweed was detected above rivermile 26.5. We are making phone contact with owners in the Stillaguamish Basin to update entry and hold harmless agreement for knotweed control.

Sonny showed a map of what had been done in the Pilchuck River. It took 11 days to walk 16 miles. Below the bridge the first knotweed was found at rivermile 23, but there could be more between RM23 and RM26. Rivermiles 16.5 to 26 are not waters of the state and we need permission to access. Neil Wheeler from the Diking District 11 gave access of 2 miles of the river because they could not see the scour line. The bee keepers are concerned about fall control of knotweed. He is attending a beekeeper meeting in Stanwood on August 20th to discuss the bee concerns. Sonny is looking for a safe area for hives. Skyview and an adjacent field are possible locations. Mel added that we should stipulate that the offer is valid this year and may not be available for the following year. Mel received permission from the Sheriff Search and Rescue to fly areas inaccessible by foot in their helicopter when available.

Board members are encouraged to spend some time with Sonny in the office and the field to understand what we do and the problems we face.

2013 YTD Budget

Sonny gave a presentation showing how much has been spent in each budget category. WSDA funding for Spartina and for North Fork Stillaguamish knotweed control ended June 30th. Grants for knotweed have been applied for and the Spartina contract should be available again July 1, 2013.

Old Business

Board members for Districts 2 and 3

There are no new board member applications for districts 2 and 3.

Strategic Plan reformatting

The reformatting will happen sometime in the winter

New Business

August Work Plan

We will be sharing a booth with the Conservation District in the Evergreen State Fair. We will also be participating in the Festival of the River. Knotweed control will begin mid August.

2014 Budget Plan approval

John reported that he had a meeting with the Public Works Director Steve Thomsen, Assistant Director Owen Carter, Road Maintenance Director Steve Flude and Road Maintenance Operations Manager Mel Reitz to discuss next year's budget. The main goal is to add an inspector/technician to work with private property owners. This could be achieved by adding funds from Surface Water Management and Road Maintenance. The County can intermix funding from different sources to supplement the general fund budget. It is easier to move money across different programs than to ask for more money from the general fund. 3 options are being presented. The first option is to operate in the existing budget. The second option is to add one inspector. The 3rd alternative is to add 2 inspectors. A meeting with the Council to discuss the budget will be held on July 30. Mel mentioned that there is huge competition for funding. A budget discussion ensued. John suggested that we create a map to show council where we are working and where we are losing ground because of the lack of funds. John and Curt will be presenting the budget plan in front of council.

Meeting adjourn at 11:54 am

Respectfully submitted by Sonny Gohrman and Geraldine Saw

Approved 9/12/2013